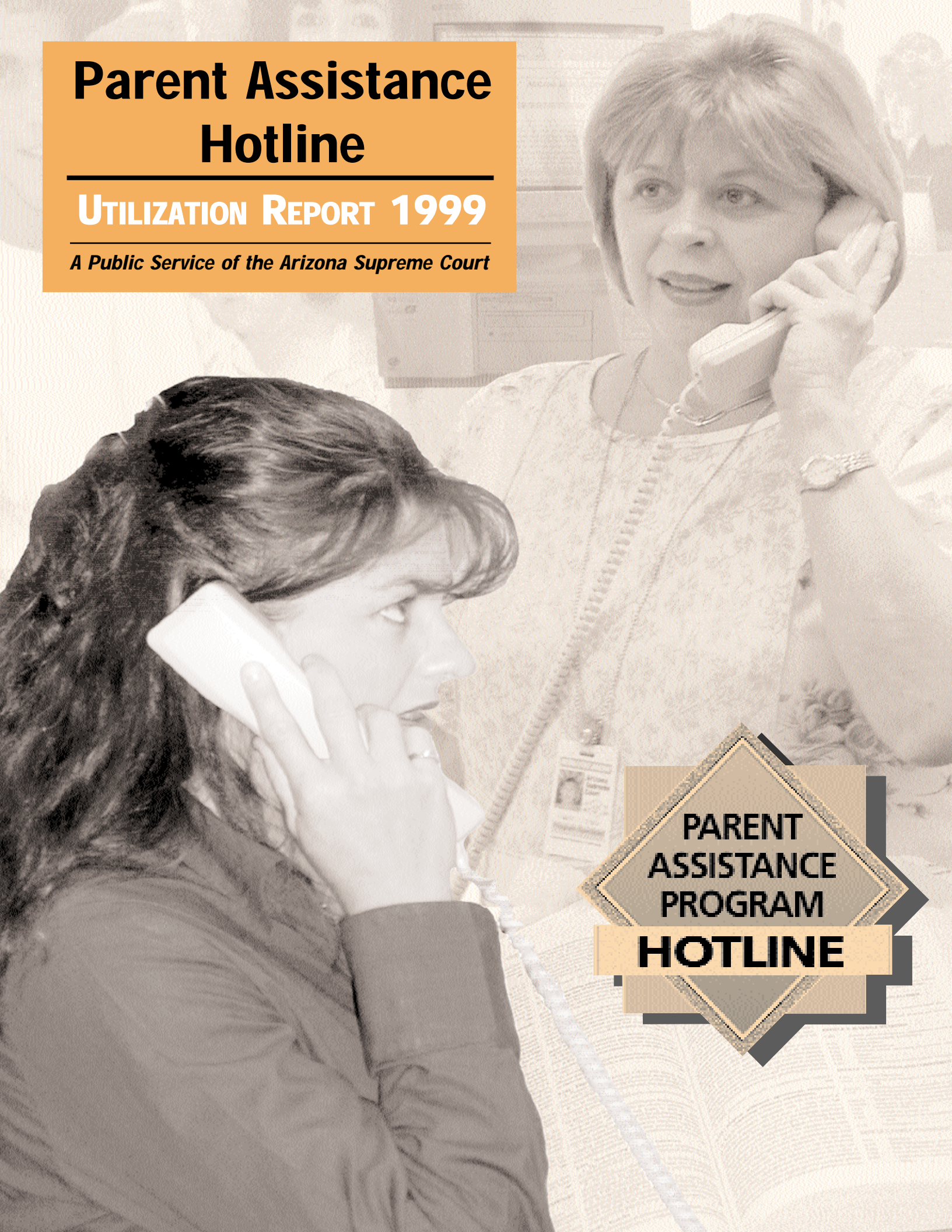


Parent Assistance Hotline

UTILIZATION REPORT 1999

A Public Service of the Arizona Supreme Court

A black and white photograph of two women in an office. The woman in the foreground is seen in profile, talking on a white corded telephone. The woman in the background is also on a telephone, looking towards the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a patterned blouse and a watch. An ID badge is visible on her chest. The background shows office shelves and papers.

**PARENT
ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM
HOTLINE**

Legislative Background

Public discussion among community leaders, parents, and professionals about the positive and negative aspects of Child Protective Services (CPS) led to the introduction of the Parent Assistance Hotline Program (PAHP) on 1-21-91; pursuant to the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) Title 8-546.09 at the time, now 8-808. A primary purpose of the program is providing information to, and assisting parents or guardians in understanding the process of removal of a child from the home. The following information is included:

- A parent's or guardian's legal rights including the right to attend court or Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) hearings
- The means for accessing personnel who can provide information on:
 1. The well being of the child removed from the home
 2. Community resources which are available
- The procedures for requesting an attorney and a temporary custody hearing, and the consequences for parents and guardians, as a result of failing to make the request(s).

House Bill 2016 was signed into law in 1992, requiring that CPS case managers distribute the Parent Assistance Hotline Program (PAHP) brochure to parents/guardians when children are removed from the home under any circumstance. In addition to this new requirement, the Hotline's statewide toll-free telephone number was added to the Temporary Custody Notice (TCN). TCN's are provided to parents and guardians when a child is removed by CPS.

The intention of House Bill 2016 is to make parents and guardians aware of:

- Their various rights
- The Parent Assistance Hotline service

In 1994, Senate Bill 1423 was signed into law, requiring that CPS case managers give the PAHP brochure to parents or guardians when CPS makes initial contact with a family.

Hotline program staff are prohibited from giving legal advice, nor may they give out information which is regarded as confidential about a specific child or case.

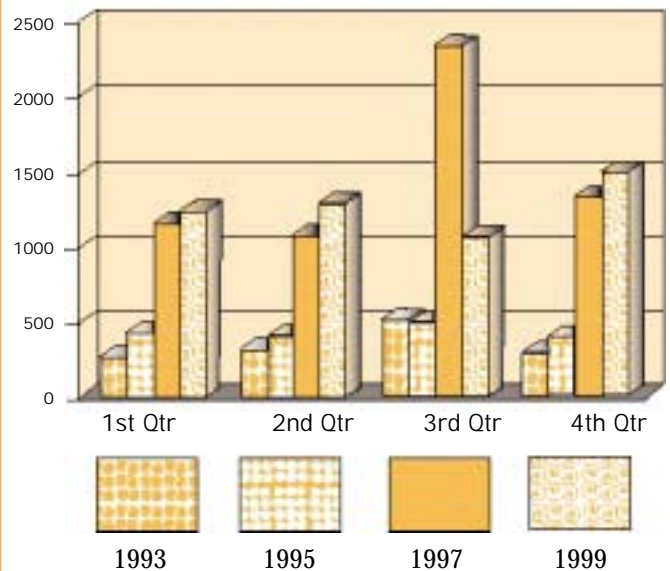
"Information provided was very helpful. It helped for CPS to know that I spoke with you [PAHP employee]. They were glad I took the initiative."

Number of Calls to the Hotline

Total Calls by Calendar Year
January 1 through December 31, 1999

Following is a breakdown of the number of calls by program

Parent Assistance Program Hotline.....	3860
Confidential Intermediary Program (CIP)	766
CourtHelp	351
Foster Care Review Board (FCRB)	94
Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)	93
Total	5164



Calls for December 1999 are estimated



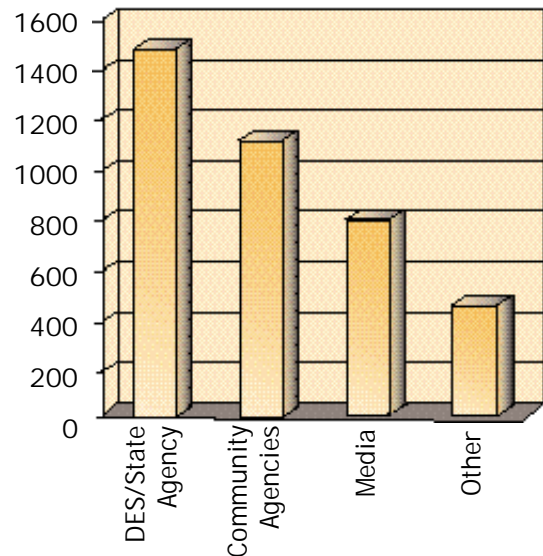
Who operates the Parent Assistance Hotline?

The Arizona Supreme Court, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), through the Court Hotline, has the responsibility of operating the Parent Assistance Hotline. In addition to performing this legislative mandate, the AOC utilizes the Hotline as a resource and point of contact that enables the public to participate in a number of other Supreme Court programs. This asset is integrated into the Supreme Court's overall "Justice 2002" plan, which endeavors to increase public access to the courts. In addition to the Parent Assistance Hotline Program, the following Court programs are currently a part of this plan:

- **The Confidential Intermediary Program (CIP)**
Callers include individuals wishing to become a certified confidential intermediary (CI), and also from members of the adoption triad, consisting of adult adoptees, birth and adoptive parents wishing to search for other triad members, and siblings. The program also allows for medically necessary searches among triad members and includes adoptees not yet adults.
- **The Arizona Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)** program continues to utilize the Hotline to field calls from the public seeking information to become volunteers. Volunteers receive training and support to serve as advocates working with individual children in foster care.
- **The Foster Care Review Board (FCRB)** in its efforts to recruit volunteers to fill vacancies on new and existing review boards uses the Hotline to assist potential volunteers. Once appointed to a review board, volunteers review the cases of children in foster care, making observations and recommendations to the Juvenile Court.
- **The AOC's Arizona Judicial Department Website** directs inquiries from the public to Hotline staff when questions involve CPS and other domestic matters. This website technology replaces the AOC's Quick Court Kiosk network. The website is far more widely

Who Refers Callers to the Hotline

January 1 through December 31, 1999



Calls for December 1999 are estimated

accessible to the public and contains vastly more court and legal information than the kiosks were capable of providing. The AOC is placing Self Service personal computers that are linked exclusively to the AOC's website at all Superior Court locations throughout the state.

- **The Supreme Court Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD)** phone number is published on Court letterhead, public notices, brochures and website for the entire Supreme Court. Hotline staff utilize the device to assist hearing impaired callers with PAHP and all court related matters.



What kind of help can I expect from the PAHP?

Calls to the Parent Assistance Hotline continue to involve parents and guardians who have been visited by CPS, or have been served with a Temporary Custody Notice (TCN). Questions most frequently asked continue to be:

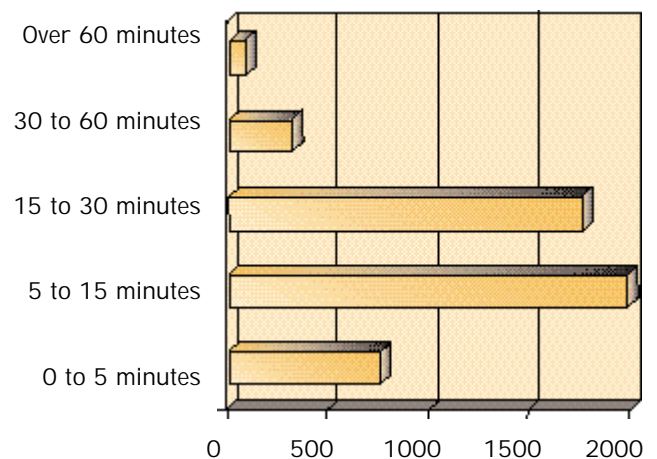
- How do I get the legal representation and advice I need, when I don't have a lot of money?
- It's all so confusing, how do I proceed?
- What can I do to "fight back"? Why is CPS bothering/harassing me?
- Can a CPS worker conduct an interview with my child without my consent or presence?
- What are my rights in regard to CPS removing my child(ren)?
- How do I get my child(ren) back?
- What can I expect when I appear in court?
- How and when can I see the judge?

Over the nearly nine years that the Hotline has been operational, word of the hotline's service has spread widely within the child welfare and court communities. Accordingly, the broadening nature of many of the problems encountered by callers continually challenge Hotline staff to keep abreast of new issues and services statewide, despite the hotline's limited resources. Some commonly addressed topics include:

Duration of Calls

January 1 through December 31, 1999

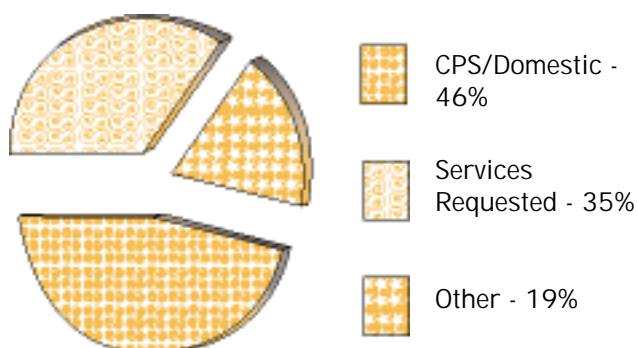
Often a caller's original question or request focuses on only a part of the problem. Hotline staff allows ample time for each caller. It is important to spend enough time with each caller to evaluate the request, allow the individual to feel understood, and direct the caller toward a constructive strategy with tools of information, resources, and support.



Calls for December 1999 are estimated

Call Description

January 1 through December 31, 1999



Calls for December 1999 are estimated

- Domestic relations/violence
- Custody, visitation, adoption, guardianship by family and non-family
- Child incorrigibility
- Marriage dissolutions, family disagreements, protection of children
- Child support initiation and enforcement
- Accessing community services, housing, food and necessities
- Behavioral health and emotional support assistance

Hotline callers are routinely asked by staff to call the hotline if an initial referral is not useful, ensuring PAHP resources remain useful and accurate.



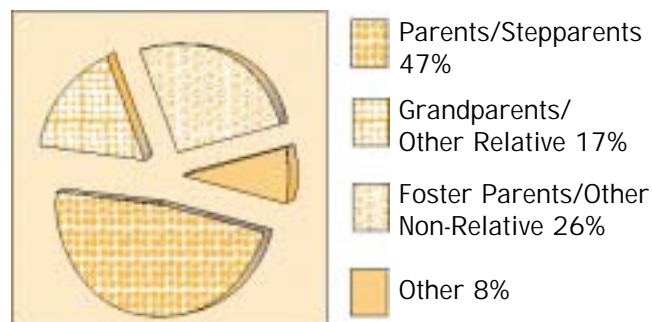
What makes the Hotline Unique?

Independent

The Parent Assistance Hotline operates within the Administrative Office of the Court. It is independent of the AZ Department of Economic Security (DES) and Juvenile Court system. Placement with the Supreme Court ensures callers will be presented an objective point of view. Since confidentiality and anonymity are provided, callers can feel free to open up to Hotline staff with more detail than they might otherwise offer. This allows Hotline staff the opportunity to help a caller become open to more effective methods of working within the DES and Juvenile Court systems. Callers frequently use the Hotline numerous times for feedback and assistance as their cases progress. The Hotline is utilized as a sounding board for complaints about, and confusion with, Child Protective Services (CPS), DES in general, the courts, and the legal system.

Who calls the Hotline

January 1 through December 31, 1999



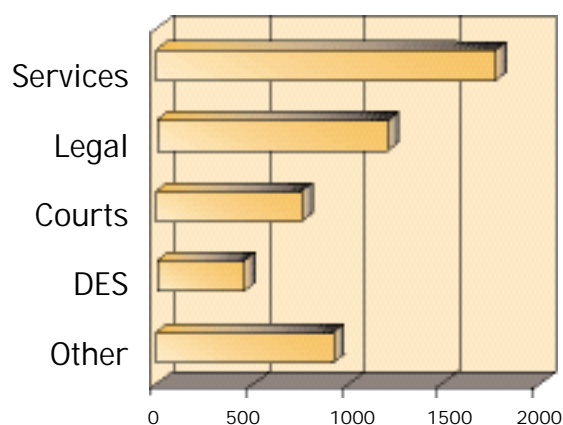
Calls for December 1999 are estimated

Where does the Hotline Refer Callers

for Parent Assistance Calls

January 1 through December 31, 1999

Hotline staff refers callers to resources where they are likely to realize assistance on their first or second call. This is part of the distinctive and individualized service of this Hotline. This may also include follow-up calls and investigation of resources. One call may require more than one action be taken.



Calls for December 1999 are estimated

Informative

Parents and caretakers often do not know the right questions to ask or cannot clearly articulate their needs. Frequently, these callers have had negative phone experience with other agencies/ entities. Hotline staff spend the time necessary to assure that callers will be able to more clearly assess their situation, identify and prioritize their goals, and come closer to resolving their problem.

Individualized

The Hotline continues to be serviced by professionals who bring a wide variety of backgrounds and skills. Staff members are encouraged to consult peers or other specialists for answers when a caller's situation is not familiar.

In order to assist those calling the Hotline in languages other than English, the Hotline contracted with AT&T Language Line Services this year. Hotline staff can now offer information and direction to callers in almost any language. We are evaluating the usefulness of this service and early reports are extremely positive.

"...being able to follow up to get more resources gives me more options and leads."

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Please print this page and use it as a poster

Child Protective Services and Domestic
Relations questions answered by phone

Call: 1-800-732-8193

602-542-9580 in the Phoenix area
or <http://www.supreme.state.az.us/aoc/parent.htm>

